

North Island College: Instructor Essential Teaching Competencies (DRAFT – WORKING COPY)

This set of essential teaching competencies was mostly copied from the University of Saskatchewan’s [Certificate in University Teaching and Learning – Essential Teaching Competency Rubric](#) and then further enhanced with insights from the following pieces of work:

- **Algonquin College** – [What is the Professor of the 21st Century?](#) – includes a framework with stages and competencies and ‘can do’ statements to explore stages of growth
- **BC Digital Learning Strategy** – [BC Post-Secondary Digital Learning Strategy](#) including [The BC Post-Secondary Digital Literacy Framework](#) outlining competencies and literacies for digital citizens, instructors, students etc.
- **eCampus Ontario** – [Empowered Educator Resource Book](#), [Anatomy of 21st Century Educators](#) and [Ontario Extend Modules](#) and Dr. Simon Bates – [Anatomy of a 21st Century Educator](#)
- **McGill University** – [A Teacher’s Journey](#) which is the ongoing, circular, collaborative and expansive journey of a teacher reflecting, relating, understanding and doing expanding outward in teaching practices which in turn is informed by Teaching by the Medicine Wheel by Dr. Nicole Bell
- **Saskatchewan Polytechnic** – [Instructor Competencies: Outlining Excellence in Teaching](#) – articulate the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to be a successful instructor
- **UBC** – [Educational Leadership Mapping Tool](#) – a resource to help instructors plot past and future journeys to see/communicate where you are in the educational leadership landscape
- **University of Saskatchewan** – [Learning Charter](#) – outlines ‘Our Journey of Teaching and Learning’, ‘Our Teaching and Learning Pursuits’, and ‘Our Commitments and Responsibilities to One Another’

The scale used in this document is explained as follows:

	Enhanced	Proficient	Developing	Emerging
Skill Development	<i>Fully developed</i> skills by demonstrating <i>high levels</i> of confidence in the role and responsibilities.	<i>Mostly developed</i> skills by demonstrating <i>good levels</i> of confidence in the role and responsibilities	<i>Developing</i> skills by demonstrating <i>increasing</i> confidence in the role and responsibilities.	<i>Beginning</i> to develop skills demonstrating <i>some</i> confidence in the role and responsibilities.
Comprehension Level of Core Concepts	Comprehension of core concepts and principles with <i>fulsome depth and breadth</i> .	Comprehension of core concepts and principles with <i>adequate depth and breadth</i> .	Comprehension of core concepts and principles with <i>some depth and breadth</i> .	Comprehension of core concepts and principles with <i>beginning depth and breadth</i> .
Application of Concepts	<i>Always able</i> to apply concepts <i>consistently and accurately</i> to practice.	<i>Mostly able</i> to apply concepts <i>consistently and accurately</i> to practice.	<i>Sometimes able</i> to apply concepts <i>consistently and accurately</i> to practice.	<i>Not always able</i> to apply concepts <i>consistently and accurately</i> to practice.
Level of Support	<i>Fully independent</i> . Provides support and assistance to others.	<i>Rarely</i> support and assistance are required.	<i>Sometimes</i> may require support and assistance.	<i>Often</i> may require support and assistance.
Training and Development	<i>No</i> training and learning development required.	<i>May or may not</i> require training and learning development.	Requires <i>some more</i> training and learning development.	Requires <i>quite a bit more</i> training and learning development.

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A. Exemplify Learning Behaviours that I am Teaching Others

Outcomes	Indicator	Enhanced	Proficient	Developing	Emerging
Curate and share content ethically	I model finding, evaluating, and using content that is current, valid, and relevant to my discipline, including Indigenous content and providing appropriate credit	<p>I demonstrate and explain ways to find and evaluate resources to ensure they are accurate, current, and relevant through the lens of my discipline.</p> <p>I have selected new, valid, and relevant content from a variety of perspectives that reflects current and diverse thinking in my discipline, including Indigenous knowledge and sources and have credited appropriately.</p>	<p>I demonstrate ways to find and evaluate resources to ensure they are accurate, current, and relevant in my discipline.</p> <p>I have selected content that reflects me or my scholarship, including Indigenous knowledge and sources, and have credited appropriately.</p>	<p>I am aware of how to find and evaluate relevant resources, but I do not regularly demonstrate it through my teaching.</p> <p>I have selected content that reflects me or my scholarship but may not be inclusive of essential voices in this space or place (Indigenous sources are generalized as 'Indigenous' or absent).</p>	<p>It is not clear to my students why I selected the content I did for the course.</p> <p>I have selected content that reflects me or my scholarship but have not recently evaluated the validity of those sources.</p>
	I model and explain academic integrity	I explain the values of academic integrity in my field at multiple points in my course, to reinforce the nature of ethical action.	I consistently demonstrate and explain the format for correctly referencing sources.	I use the correct formats as a reference for students, but I do not explain them.	I do not include a complete list or description of sources in the course outline or for sources of information while teaching.
Respond to diversity in worldview, position, and power	I reflect on personal power and position and develop strategies for power sharing and choices for students	<p>I purposefully select ways to share power with students and give choices to students that evolve their own ability to share power or use effective strategies.</p> <p>My students get to choose between ways they could be assessed.</p>	<p>I can describe my personal power and position and explain the implications this has for my teaching. I can name possible strategies to use to share power.</p> <p>I provide some choices within an assessment.</p>	<p>I can describe my personal power and position. I recognize students' personal power and position.</p> <p>I acknowledge that my position as an educator comes with inherent power.</p>	<p>I have not considered the relationship between my personal power and position and the implications this has for my teaching.</p> <p>I am not familiar with strategies for sharing power with students or creating choices.</p>

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	I value perspectives and worldviews different than my own	<p>I integrate and communicate the value of different worldviews and perspectives into course content and lessons.</p> <p>I demonstrate skillful perspective-taking when facilitating learning activities.</p>	<p>I describe the implications of taking different worldviews and perspectives on instruction and course content.</p> <p>I participate actively in activities that promote diverse perspectives.</p>	<p>I describe different worldviews and perspectives and indicate their importance.</p> <p>I participate passively in activities that promote diverse perspectives.</p>	<p>I primarily instruct from my own worldview and perspective.</p> <p>I reference the perspectives that have been historically valued by my discipline.</p>
Communicate effectively	I use strategies to encourage and foster open and healthy dialogue among my students	<p>My course requires students to purposefully select and use strategies for communication in response to context and audience almost every time the class meets.</p> <p>I encourage all members to speak, and weave student responses and questions easily into the flow of the discussion or discussion board.</p> <p>We have set norms or expectations for good dialogue together.</p>	<p>I give students regular opportunities to exchange ideas, facts, and perspectives with each other.</p> <p>I describe what I expect so we will have an open and healthy dialogue.</p> <p>I use a variety of strategies to have students share ideas in small and large groups.</p>	<p>I ask my students questions that are phrased clearly, but don't spark extended discussion.</p> <p>A few students participate regularly, some students occasionally, and others never participate.</p> <p>Students do not need to participate to do well in the course.</p>	<p>I give my students occasional opportunities to interact and invite questions.</p> <p>I work to ensure interactions are appropriate.</p>
	I purposefully select and use strategies to communicate inclusively and responsively with my students	<p>I offer course content and teach skills in a way that is accessible in a variety of formats and paces, and that uses accessible language.</p> <p>I make changes in what or how I communicate to include more students as I get to know them and communicate why they are important to what we learn.</p>	<p>I communicate clearly in written, spoken, and visual forms and use inclusive language to start to create belonging for most students in my class.</p> <p>I clarify what disciplinary language means and make efforts to accommodate students' different communication needs beyond the legally required minimum as described by DALs.</p>	<p>I communicate clearly in at least two forms (written, spoken, and visual), and I make my expectations of my students clear to them.</p> <p>Communicating that I wish to adapt my presentation or teaching to accommodate students with different learning needs is not a priority for me.</p>	<p>At times, my students may struggle to understand what I am trying to teach and ask for clarification.</p> <p>When that happens, I try to explain more slowly or clearly.</p>

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B. Aligned Course Designs and Teaching Approaches

Outcome	Indicators	Enhanced	Proficient	Developing	Emerging
Apply principles of how learning works to courses	I have course components, instructional strategies and assessment methods that align with the principles of how learning works	<p>I can describe and apply all the core concepts and related misconceptions and stumbling blocks students have in my discipline area.</p> <p>I have fluency in the core principles of how learning works not just generally but also related to my discipline area and can outline how I have incorporated them into my courses.</p>		I can describe all the core concepts and related misconceptions and stumbling blocks students have in my discipline area.	
Design courses with constructive alignment	I articulate the type and difficulty of learning, given the students in my context	<p>I describe the learning processes used by students to successfully complete a task.</p> <p>I justify my selection of verbs to prioritize higher order thinking with appropriate cognitive load for the stage of learning.</p> <p>I design a learning activity that requires students to use more complex structures and hold onto a variety of knowledge, skills, and attitudes to complete it.</p>	<p>I purposefully select the learning activity students will do to meet a learning outcome based on the students' prior knowledge, skills, and attitudes.</p> <p>I select verbs that align with the appropriate cognitive load for the stage of learning.</p> <p>When designing instruction, what the students are doing is my primary consideration.</p>	<p>I create learning activities around the content of my course without considering prior knowledge, skills, and attitudes.</p> <p>My learning outcomes are aligned with the knowledge and skills that students acquire in the course.</p> <p>My instruction is centered around transmitting the knowledge that I have determined to be important to progress in my discipline.</p>	<p>My course outcomes are misaligned or simply out of any discernable sequence within a program or suite of courses.</p> <p>My learning outcomes are aligned with the knowledge that students acquire in the course.</p> <p>My instruction is centered around the transmission of facts or ideas that are easily retrieved online and there is little to no consideration to student cognition beyond memorization.</p>
	I create learning outcomes that are active, and have all three parts (active verb, content, context)	My learning outcomes are consistently active and have all three parts when used in my teaching and planning. I demonstrate integration of my outcomes across the course.	My learning outcomes are consistently active and have all three parts when used in my teaching and planning.	I have some active learning outcomes with all three parts, but there are times where what students would need to demonstrate is vague.	My learning outcomes have some parts (but not all three consistently), are rarely active, and are not consistently applied across my course.

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Outcome	Indicators	Enhanced	Proficient	Developing	Emerging
	I select active and engaging instructional strategies aligned to an outcome and intended assessment	<p>My planned activities are aligned with outcomes and assessment, and the content across the course.</p> <p>Instructional activities are specifically designed to help students achieve them through authentic means.</p>	I have activities or content aligned to the outcomes and assessment and they are specifically designed to help students achieve them.	<p>The connections I have made between the outcomes, assessments, and activities are vague at times.</p> <p>Sometimes my activities are not connected to a learning outcome or assessment, or outcomes or assessments are not connected to activities.</p>	My instructional activities are often similar, and my planning is focused often more on what the instructor needs to cover than what students learn.
Design courses to promote learning	I chunk, sequence, and scaffold essential content & skills	<p>I deliberately break essential content and skills into chunks and teach them in a sequence that students can logically follow that is consistent with outcomes and assessment.</p> <p>I design activities and resources to help students learn the identified hardest elements.</p>	<p>I organize essential content and skills in a logical order that is consistent with outcomes and assessments.</p> <p>More of my time is focused on the harder elements. I design some activities and resources to help students learn essential skills and knowledge at points of difficulty.</p>	<p>I create a plan for coverage of content and skills. This plan builds on content and skills that were taught prior.</p> <p>It is not clear why the specific content and skills were selected, and others were rejected.</p>	<p>I introduce content and skills in the order that I was given it or the text presented it, and it is planned based on large blocks of instructional time.</p> <p>It is likely there will be too much or too little content, and it may be unclear to students what is important.</p>
	I design to engage diverse students	<p>My course design integrates diverse students based on what I continually learn about them and their contexts.</p> <p>To help me get this right, I provide room for their choice and voice, and I integrate diverse worldviews and perspectives.</p>	<p>I adapt my course design in response to being inclusive of diverse students based on what I learn about my students.</p> <p>I include diverse world views and perspectives and provide opportunities for students to share their own world views and perspectives.</p>	<p>I try to learn about my students and their contexts, and I leave room in my course for them to share their world views.</p> <p>I am not yet sure how to adapt my course design based on what they share and what I learn.</p>	I am not comfortable conducting analyses of my students or their contexts, and I do not know how I would include diverse world views in my course.
	I use formative assessment to inform and adapt course/lesson design	As I am teaching, my students are practicing and getting feedback. Sometimes I will reteach an element or change my pace based on what I observe.	As I am teaching, my students are doing activities that tell me what they are understanding. I shape some parts of my lesson as I go based on what my students understand and do.	My lessons alternate between learning new information and checking to see what students have understood. If many students are confused, sometimes I reteach in another class.	My lesson plan is about the content I teach. I don't really make changes based on what my students do, except to answer questions.

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Use effective instructional approaches given the learning outcomes, context, and students		I know how well I have taught each lesson based on what my students could do while I taught.			
	I purposefully use a wide range of accessible communication strategies that make it easy for my students to understand what I am teaching	<p>I identify student needs and create clear and varied oral, visual, and written communication to fit the purpose.</p> <p>I follow accessibility standards when creating or modifying strategies and materials.</p>	I communicate verbally, visually, and in written form to promote student learning and clarify as needed when students do not understand what I am teaching.	<p>My communication does not cause issues, but it does not actively promote student learning.</p> <p>Almost all my communication strategies are similar.</p>	I use the same modes of communicating regardless of audience or purpose, even when the method causes problems.
	I identify potential solutions to prevent and respond to classroom management problems	I purposefully design my lessons to anticipate issues with structure or expectations, and clarifications during classes are timely and effective.	I design lesson plans to have routines, structure, or clear expectations. When issues arise, I have a response planned.	I consider possible classroom routines, structure, or clear expectations in planning for my class.	I respond to issues as they arise in my classroom.

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C. Fair Assessments and Evaluations

Outcome	Indicators	Enhanced	Proficient	Developing	Emerging
Design assessment with constructive alignment	I select assessment strategies, both formative and summative, aligned to a learning outcome	I describe multiple ways specific learning outcomes are assessed in sequence, including a progression of formative and summative assessments.	I select assessment strategies that provide evidence that students have successfully learned and demonstrated the learning outcomes. My formative assessments are designed to prepare students to demonstrate the outcomes on summative assessments.	I describe the relationship between course content and assessment content clearly, but the relationship to the outcome is vague. My assessments are predominantly summative.	I generate outcomes that are challenging to assess, or only relate outcomes to assessments periodically
	I design formative and summative tools (rubrics, checklists, rating scales, etc.) that make learning outcomes and success criteria manageable and explicit	I design formative and summative assessment tools to be used by students to develop a clear understanding of what successfully learning the outcome looks like. The assessment tools I have created make it likely that students will only expend effort on things that are essential for the outcomes, and they can be confident in how well they will do.	I design formative and summative assessment tools that have clear criteria and only require students to do things that are essential to the outcome to reduce student uncertainty about how well they are doing. Students have formative opportunities to practice small chunks of what they will need to demonstrate in summative assessment, getting effective feedback about how to improve.	I design assessment tools that are focused on the outcomes, but they are primarily summative. Clarity around assignment expectations is strong and provides transparency about what a good demonstration of the outcomes looks like but because I use less formative assessment, students may know what good looks like, but may not know how well they are doing as they learn.	I duplicate assessment tools commonly utilized within my discipline and use language that assumes students understand criteria because it is common.
Elicit evidence of specific	I give students multiple opportunities to learn through practice and feedback, so they have sufficient time and support to reflect and improve (assessment for learning)	My students undertake low- or no-stakes assessments with constructive feedback as part of the daily learning process. They get feedback from multiple sources about their practice, and their reflections and self-assessments indicate that they usually know how well they are doing.	My students get timely and actionable formative feedback throughout the course, so they know how well they are doing. Because the assessments are practice, they are low stakes. I have designed the course, so students get feedback from me, and from other sources, like peers, themselves, or experts.	My students practice what we are learning in class and can tell how well they are doing by comparing themselves to others or to the right answer, or because I mark the practice. If they choose to reflect on it, my students might know what to do to get better.	My students get feedback from me after the learning activity, assignment, or assessment is completed.

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Outcome	Indicators	Enhanced	Proficient	Developing	Emerging
student learning					
	I generate assessment tasks that are inclusive and transparent measures of student learning, so students have equitable opportunities to demonstrate their learning	<p>I design or heavily adapt both formative and summative assessment tasks which are each aligned with learning outcomes and are similar (students practice and receive feedback on formative tasks that model or reflect the summative task).</p> <p>My criteria for success are clear and easily interpreted. Examples of past success might be shared.</p> <p>I allow students to self-select between tasks or self-determine their path to success in the course.</p>	<p>I design, adopt, or adapt summative assessment tasks which are each aligned with learning outcomes.</p> <p>I clarify the criteria for success and how the grade will be determined.</p> <p>My assessments are designed to meet different student needs OR provides choices that allow students to meet their needs</p>	<p>My assessment tasks relate to knowledge and skills. They are assessed the same for everyone.</p> <p>My students have essential information about what they are trying to demonstrate but are missing some details that would help all students know how to succeed or ask for accommodation if needed.</p>	<p>My assessment tasks are mostly summative, and students may not know in advance how they will be assessed.</p> <p>I do not clarify what students need to do, not what skills and knowledge they will demonstrate or what ‘good’ looks like.</p>
	I design assessment tasks that require students to apply disciplinary learning under authentic, or close to authentic as possible, circumstances.	Assessment tasks give students the opportunity to apply what they have learned beyond the classroom with some unpredictable context-specific factors that require student decision-making.	Assessment tasks give students the opportunity to apply what they have learned beyond the classroom context.	Assessment tasks give students the opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned with active learning in the classroom context.	Assessment tasks check to see if a student remembers information covered in class and can reproduce it in an academic form like a test or essay.

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Outcome	Indicators	Enhanced	Proficient	Developing	Emerging
Provide prompt and constructive feedback and create opportunities for students to reflect on and share about learning	I demonstrate strategies for providing constructive feedback	<p>I provide feedback to students that is specific, constructive, actionable, and designed to improve student performance.</p> <p>I provide feedback continually throughout the course and prior to submission of final work that aligns with course outcomes.</p>	<p>I provide feedback to students that is specific, constructive, actionable, and designed to improve student performance.</p> <p>I provide feedback more than once prior to the submission of the final work. My feedback aligns with course outcomes.</p>	<p>I provide feedback to students to justify grades throughout the term.</p> <p>I am unsure if my feedback aligns with course outcomes and I am working to be specific and constructive, although not yet confident I have developed this skill.</p>	<p>I provide feedback to students at the end or close to the end of term, and I focus on feedback that justifies the grade.</p> <p>I am not familiar with how to align feedback to course outcomes, and I am not confident I provide specific, constructive, or actionable feedback.</p>
	I embed opportunities for reflection on learning in student assessments.	<p>I design tasks and assignments that require students to think about their learning and I explicitly teach this skill.</p> <p>My students self-identify a goal to guide their own learning and assess their learning before and after an assignment or activity.</p> <p>The skills of goal setting and reflecting on learning align clearly with my course outcomes and are embedded across my course.</p>	<p>I design tasks and assignments that require students to think about their learning.</p> <p>I embed reflective tasks in learning with a clear purpose that aligns with my course outcomes. I clearly identify the skills I require students to practice in order to reflect on learning.</p>	<p>I include tasks and assignments that require students to think about their learning.</p> <p>I am not confident these tasks are aligned with learning outcomes, and I have not yet considered how they connect to other assignments in the course.</p>	<p>There are few opportunities designed for students to reflect on their learning and little to no guidance is given on how to reflect.</p>

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D. Digitally Competent Educator Activities

Outcome	Indicators	Enhanced	Proficient	Developing	Emerging
Effectively use learning technologies	I can appropriately select and evaluate learning technologies that are aligned with student learning experiences	Coming soon			
	I can confidently use and properly integrate the technologies into the learning experience in purposeful ways				
Create and provide open resources for learning by all	I can create engaging and interactive open course materials for my students.				
Apply and abide by the principles of privacy protection, inclusion, and accessibility in digital spaces	Is aware that power inequalities can exist in digital spaces, and contribute to equitable and safer spaces				

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E. Reflective Practitioner and Scholarly Teacher

Outcome	Indicators	Enhanced	Proficient	Developing	Emerging
Begin to clarify and refine a teaching philosophy	I articulate personal beliefs and assumptions about “good teaching”	I identify and question assumptions about learning, articulate the difference between values and actions, and describe specific actions I take in the classroom that align with my beliefs and values about good teaching.	I describe the actions I take in the classroom and the beliefs about good teaching that guide my actions. Assumptions I have about learning are noted but not questioned or backed up by evidence.	I state general values and beliefs about teaching but do not describe specifics for how these are enacted in my classroom.	I describe what others have done, value, or believe about good teaching.
	I set measurable goals for developing teaching practice guided by evidence	I set measurable and achievable goals for development in my teaching that are informed by evidence and diverse sources of feedback on teaching.	I set goals for development in my teaching that are informed by evidence and past feedback on teaching.	I set goals for my teaching development without connecting them to evidence or feedback on teaching.	I express intent but have not yet developed goals to guide my teaching development.
I make appropriate changes based on feedback		My responses to feedback on my teaching accept agency and evidence shows clear improvement over time through actions broken into achievable chunks.	My responses to feedback on my teaching indicate agency, are specific, and likely to improve teaching over time.	My responses to feedback on my teaching indicate some agency, are general, and actions may not be strategic.	My responses to feedback on my teaching are general or not actionable.